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New York

President:	Mr. Adechi	(Benin)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Benmehidi
	Argentina	Mr. Mayoral
	Brazil	Mr. Valle
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Denmark	Mr. Faaborg-Andersen
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Greece	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan	Mr. Oshima
	Philippines	Mr. Baja
	Romania	Mr. Dumitru
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Mahiga
	United States of America	Mr. Fendrick

Agenda

The situation in Timor-Leste

Progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (S/2005/99)

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05-25017 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Timor-Leste

Progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (S/2005/99)

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, Indonesia, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Portugal, Singapore, Thailand and Timor-Leste in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to the Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste, Mr. José Ramos-Horta.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Ramos-Horta (Timor-Leste) took a seat at the Council table; the representatives of the other aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council table.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste and Head of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Hasegawa to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2005/99, which contains the progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor. I should also like to draw members' attention to document S/2005/103, which contains a letter dated 23 February 2005 from the representative of Timor-Leste addressed to the Secretary-General.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste and Head of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor.

I now give the floor to Mr. Hasegawa.

Mr. Hasegawa: It is indeed a great pleasure for me to address the Council on the progress made in consolidating peace and building democratic institutions in Timor-Leste. As guided by resolution 1573 (2004) of 16 November 2004, we have intensified efforts to implement the exit strategy by increasing Timorese involvement and ownership at all levels. At the same time, following the suggestions of several Council members, we have finalized the task of the transition working groups to assess the accomplishments and identify remaining challenges.

Today, let me first start with recent political and security developments and then address the status of the progress made in the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). Finally, I will share with the Council my own assessment of the remaining challenges identified by the transition working groups.

The first elections since independence took place in December 2004 in an atmosphere free of intimidation for village chiefs and councils in the districts of Bobonaro and Oecussi. The next round of elections will be held in March in Lautem, Baucau and Manatuto districts, followed by the remaining eight districts from April to June.

On the diplomatic front, Timor-Leste has continued to make progress in strengthening its relations with neighbouring countries, particularly Indonesia. Indonesia and Timor-Leste held a summit meeting in December and enhanced the relationship of mutual confidence and appreciation when President

Gusmão delivered to President Yudhoyono a check from the people of Timor-Leste for tsunami relief efforts. Recently, the two countries have established the Truth and Friendship Commission to deal with, among other things, crimes committed in 1999.

Tangible progress was also made in building democratic institutions in Timor-Leste. The organic law of the Superior Council for Defense and Security was approved by Parliament on 14 February and promulgated by the President on 17 February. The law, together with the organic law of the Council of State, represents another step in strengthening the principal organs of sovereignty. The draft law on freedom of assembly and demonstration is expected to be adopted shortly. The Council of Ministers also approved on 9 February laws on foreign and domestic investments. Another praiseworthy accomplishment of the Government is the drafting of the law on the petroleum fund, which will ensure accountability of petroleum revenue management.

In spite of the tangible progress made on many fronts, a number of major challenges indeed remain. The most demanding challenge is the land-border demarcation negotiations. A provisional line comprising more than 95 per cent of the borderline has been agreed upon at the technical level, yet it has not been possible for the two countries to resolve the remaining borderline issues and to establish a transportation corridor linking Oecussi with the rest of Timor-Leste.

As the second transition working group has pointed out, the fight against corruption is a newly emerging challenge for the country that requires not only the formulation and implementation of legislation, but also the establishment of ethical standards and a culture of transparency and accountability. The National Parliament is expected very shortly to appoint a long-awaited Provedor for Human Rights and Justice. That will be a big step towards governance based on transparency and accountability not only for human rights, but also in th fight against corruption. Furthermore, I hope that it will be possible to adopt a law on the office of the inspector general, along with other laws to establish the high administrative, tax and audit court and other administrative courts of first instance.

Let me now turn to the status of the implementation of the UNMISET mandate. On the first programme — regarding institution-building — efforts have continued to made and progress has been registered. Some State institutions are now less dependent on international experts. For example, the total number of UNMISET international advisers in the finance and banking institutions has declined from 35 two years ago, when I arrived in Timor-Leste, to 16 last year. By May of this year, we should be able to reduce the number further, to nine. Nevertheless, it has become clear that several ministries and State institutions continue to require international advisers to function effectively. That is most evident in justice, legal and security matters, as well as in the finance and monetary sector, where highly specialized expertise is required. The Prime Minister has therefore requested the retention of 58 "most critical" posts. While recognizing the continuing need for many of those posts, closer scrutiny on our part suggests that perhaps 45 posts may be sufficient.

In order to identify possible "responsible hands," we have embarked upon intense consultations with bilateral and multilateral partners, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank. UNDP is making arrangements to make available the resources to fund 9 out of 58 posts, but only for a period of six months. The World Bank intends to implement the planning and financial capacity-building programme by early next year, when it will know how many posts it can indeed fund. Other than those promises, there has been no firm commitment. Without some form of continued international assistance, it is almost certain that several State institutions will not be able to discharge their sovereign functions adequately, if the most critical civilian advisors are discontinued after May 2005. We hope that bilateral development partners will be able to make concrete commitments at the development partners conference, which is to be held in Dili on 25 and 26 April.

I shall now turn to the second programme, on support for the development of law enforcement in Timor-Leste. United Nations police continue to play their advisory role, focusing on the improvement of policing capability, professional development and the institutional strengthening of the Timor-Leste national police. The professional skill development plan is now concluding its second phase of training national police officers in all 13 districts. United Nations police advisers are working closely with bilateral partners on

developing the national police of Timor-Leste, including through the Timor-Leste Police Development Project — which is sponsored jointly by Australia and the United Kingdom — the delivery of the "training the trainers" course and the design of a course for station commanders.

Despite significant progress made in training officers of the Timor-Leste national police on human rights issues, the excessive use of force and professional misconduct by the national police remain major challenges. Technical advisers of the United Nations police are advising and training national police officers to deal with a large backlog of professional ethics cases at the headquarters of the national police.

Let me now turn to the third programme, on the security and stability of the country. Timor-Leste has remained relatively calm and stable, but the operational environment remains fragile. Members of the Timor-Leste national police and the Timor-Leste national defence forces (F-FDTL) have clashed in recent months. Armed elements with possible links to ex-militia groups made incursions into Timor-Leste in January and February, posing a potential threat to the security of the country. The border remains difficult to control, and illegal trading, smuggling and illegal crossings continue to take place. There is a need to enhance the border-management capacity of the Border Patrol Unit (BPU).

The absence of an agreed border and a legal framework to manage the border after 20 May 2005 will add considerably to that problem. Despite our hopes, it remains highly unlikely that a final land-border agreement can be concluded by 20 May. The critical vulnerability remains the effectiveness of the Border Patrol Unit to maintain the security situation along the border. The BPU assumed border management responsibilities on 20 May 2004, but has not yet gained sufficient experience, confidence or capacity to manage border affairs alone, without the support of United Nations military liaison groups. Its relationship with the Indonesian Armed Forces (TNI) is still at an initial stage of development, relying heavily on the facilitation of military liaison officers.

The UNMISET military component will continue to assist with the development of the F-FDTL through its skills and knowledge transfer programme, covering five training modules. That programme complements various existing bilateral arrangements. At the same time, the military component is also assisting the development of the BPU, in cooperation with United Nations police. The military liaison group began providing six training courses out of a total of 23 modules, which will conclude in March. In view of the lack of adequate border arrangements and the insufficient capacity of national security agencies, I consider it necessary to retain at least 35 military liaison officers.

The success of United Nations peacekeeping operations in Timor-Leste was largely due to Indonesia's genuine acceptance of the independence of Timor-Leste and the determination of the people and the leaders of Timor-Leste to build peace and stability anchored on the principles of democratic governance. It is in that context that the international community may need to address the remaining challenges. According to the findings of the transition working groups, there remain major challenges in four areas: security and stability; the development of police capability; the public administration and justice system; and human rights and promotion of good governance. All of those are important in the post-conflict situation. If the United Nations totally withdraws the military liaison officers and police trainers upon the completion of UNMISET's mandate, on 20 May, Timor-Leste may face insurmountable challenges on its path towards peace and stability. I therefore fully support the Secretary-General's recommendation to maintain a United Nations mission, with an appropriately scaled-down structure as described in the report before the Council (S/2005/99), for a period of up to 12 months, until 20 May 2006. That period could be shortened if, within that time frame, bilateral and multilateral arrangements are identified to assume the critical responsibilities currently performed by UNMISET.

Just before I departed Dili for New York, legal advisers brought to my attention the urgent need to lay out basic legal frameworks for several ministries. Similarly, the Timorese authorities have asked me how they can combat emerging corruption by not only strictly adhering to the rule of law but also implementing disciplinary measures. Here is a country that has been created by the United Nations and whose national leaders are eager to build transparent and accountable State institutions. And they are asking for continued support from the Security Council, which they consider to be their guardian. In a separate

meeting with the Secretary of Defence and the commanders of the East Timorese national defence force (F-FDTL), they pleaded that the United Nations not abandon them, reminding me that the national defence force had been created by the United Nations under the leadership of the late Sergio Vieira de Mello when he was exercising sovereign power.

Before I conclude my statement, let me comment briefly on the serious-crimes process. The prosecutors made strenuous efforts and ended all investigations in November 2004. The trials will be completed by May of this year, as mandated by Security Council resolution 1543 (2004). The Serious Crimes Unit and the Special Panels are in the process of preparing a database that will allow electronic searches of all of the Unit's cases. Increasing national ownership remains important, as approximately 340 indicted persons remain outside Timor-Leste and may return in the coming years.

It is clear that the serious-crimes process will not be able to respond fully to the desire for justice on behalf of all the victims of the 1999 violence. In that regard, the Secretary-General has established a commission of experts that will assess the outcome of the two judicial processes under way in Jakarta and Dili. The commission of experts will also consider ways in which its analysis could be of assistance to the Truth and Friendship Commission. I look forward to receiving the commission's recommendations to the Secretary-General.

The tolerance of the people of Timor-Leste and the balanced leadership exercised by President Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri, National Parliament President Francisco "Lu-Olo" Guterres and Foreign Minister José Ramos-Horta have enabled Timor-Leste to move forward steadily on its path to peace and stability. It is clear from my close interaction with the Timorese leaders how much they appreciate and respect the constructive role played by the United Nations. I am most pleased today to see Timorese Foreign Minister Ramos-Horta and Ambassador José Luis Guterres in this Chamber.

Finally, I wish to express my appreciation for the valuable work carried out by my Deputy, Atul Khare, and by all the staff in the civilian, police and military components of UNMISET for their dedicated efforts in discharging the mandate of the Mission in its consolidation phase.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Hasegawa for his briefing.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Ramos-Horta (Timor-Leste): Before I deliver my written remarks, I should like to express my sincere condolences to the people and the Government of Bangladesh and to the United Nations family for the brutal murder of Bangladeshi peacekeepers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We particularly feel the peacekeepers' tragic death because we cooperated closely with Bangladeshi peacekeepers in my own country, Timor-Leste, when Bangladesh contributed an army engineer battalion in 2000 and 2001. To the people and the Government of Bangladesh and to the United Nations family, our most sincere condolences.

I should also like to say a few special words about your country, Mr. President. You might not be aware that I visited Benin in 1977. Then an unknown young representative of a national liberation movement, I was there at the invitation of President Mathieu Kerekou to participate in an international conference in solidarity with Benin in the aftermath of an attempted mercenary invasion of the country. When Benin served on the Security Council from 1976 to 1977, it was one of our greatest defenders, and we will never forget that. So it is quite ironic and interesting that, more than 25 years later, you are presiding over the Council at a time when the Council must make some critical decisions regarding the future of the United Nations presence in Timor-Leste. We trust that under your guidance the Security Council will once again make wise decisions, consistent with the decisions it has made in the past five years, in ensuring that the gains we have seen in my country will continue to be consolidated. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

I have a written text — some 11 single-spaced pages — that might take some time to read. Therefore, I shall try to summarize many of my points in order to make the most of the Council's time.

First of all, I should like to recall that, when I addressed the Council a year ago, on 20 February 2004, I had the audacity to say that I do not always agree 100 per cent with the reports of the Secretary-General, in spite of our respect and affection for him

and for the people around him, just as I would not say that we agree 100 per cent with what the Bible says. Therefore, forgive me if I have some disagreements with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. However, those disagreements are somewhat minor.

When I see the reduced figures proposed in the report for continued United Nations assistance, I recall that my Prime Minister, Mr. Alkatiri, had clearly highlighted our minimal requests to the Secretary-General and to the heads of State or Government of your countries. Those requests had been made after a very careful assessment of our situation and our needs. They represent the barest minimum of required assistance secured through assessed contributions.

Let me begin with the requirement for a continued presence of military liaison officers. I am told that currently the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) has 42 military liaison officers, who are undertaking the facilitation of exchanges between our Border Patrol Unit (BPU) and the Tentara Nasional Indonesia (TNI), monitoring developments along the land border that could have an impact on overall security and stability, and providing mentoring and coaching to the members of the BPU.

The only legal agreement governing the interaction and exchanges between the border security agencies of our two countries is the military liaison arrangement concluded between the United Nations security force and the TNI. We have not been able to put in place any successor arrangement, as we have been preoccupied with defining our land border as a first step towards cooperative border arrangements. And we have regrettably come to the conclusion that the capacities of the BPU, although developing, need to be further strengthened.

Indonesia has made it amply clear that the main security agency on its side of the border will be the TNI — the Indonesian army — as is the case with other land borders of Indonesia. That implies that the training of the BPU needs to be provided not only by police officers but also by military liaison officers, who are most conversant with military matters. It seems clear to us that if the military liaison officers have been given additional training responsibilities, their numbers should be increased or at least maintained at the same level.

I have been asked whether the element guaranteeing the security and support of the military liaison officers could be reduced. I must state frankly that if our national security agencies were capable of assuring the safety and security of the liaison officers, we would not be asking for their continued presence at all. We are not, unfortunately, in a position to guarantee their safety and security, and that has been made clear in the letter from Prime Minister Alkatiri. The report of the Secretary-General proposes a 144-strong element for that purpose.

On the other hand, I can assure the Council that if any country in the region were to offer stand-by arrangements for evacuation and other logistical support, Timor-Leste would be keen to discuss such an arrangement. While we hear from some friends that Timor-Leste could be more effectively assisted through bilateral arrangements, we are puzzled that so far we have not heard any positive reaction to the very innovative suggestion that some of our closest neighbors provide a stand-by evacuation force that could be activated at very short notice. The negative reaction, or silence, in regard to our creative proposal makes us even more skeptical when we hear about bilateral arrangements in lieu of a multilateral mechanism.

Before moving on, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Council for having stationed the 125-strong Brazilian International Response Unit in Timor-Leste since last May. Fortunately, we have not needed to request its assistance over the last few months. Moreover, our own security agencies, particularly the Police Reserve Unit, have benefited from the training provided by the United Nations police and are functioning well in dealing with reports of movements and sightings of ex-militia elements, who are engaged in sporadic criminal activities.

The Council will be happy to hear that despite predictions to the contrary from some quarters, the elements of the National Police Reserve Unit have behaved with remarkable discipline and are deeply conscious of promoting and protecting the human rights of all, including those of the former militia and current criminal elements. It was for that reason that we decided not to seek the continued retention of the International Response Unit and agree with the recommendation that it may be withdrawn when the current mandate of UNMISET ends.

Allow me now to briefly touch upon our request for police trainers. We wish to see the emergence of a professional, ethical, accountable, responsive and dedicated police service in Timor-Leste. We are grateful to several bilateral and multilateral partners who are assisting us in this direction, particularly the initiative taken by Australia and the United Kingdom for the Timor-Leste Police Development Programme, and the United States, China and Malaysia. I am pleased to inform Council members that a significant number of East Timorese police officers will soon receive training in criminal investigation and traffic control in Indonesia.

Several areas such as forensics, the specialized units, investigations unit and the like are not covered at present by those initiatives. Hence we feel that the retention of the 62 police trainers deployed in those areas where multilateral and bilateral assistance is currently unlikely to become available is essential. I feel that the decision of the Secretariat to reduce the number of police trainers requested by more than a third may not be justified.

I would like to briefly outline our requirements for critical civilian advisers to strengthen the institutional capacity of our State institutions. Our own assessment indicates that nearly 68 advisers will be required. However, our friend, Mr. Hasegawa, who seemed to know the Security Council even better than I do, particularly advised me not even to think of asking the Council for any more than the 58 critical advisers currently deployed by UNMISET. We have reluctantly heeded his advice and refrained from projecting our actual requirements over and above the assistance being provided by several bilateral and multilateral partners, and have requested the Council to consider providing only 58 civilian advisers.

Let me say that one reason why we have insisted we need 68 advisors is because our experience with so-called voluntary contributions provided through bilateral arrangements has not been the most remarkable. When we in East Timor, in particular myself — and I am sure the Secretary-General and some other recipient countries have observed this; indeed we just need to ask our friend Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan and a few other countries — hear the phrase, "voluntary bilateral arrangements", it rarely means that those promises are going to be delivered. Therefore we are extremely skeptical when we are asked to rely on bilateral arrangements. Of course, we must pay due tribute to those countries who have really contributed to United Nations Development Programme funding to pay for advisers to assist our Government. But if we were to rely exclusively on bilateral funding, we would be in a very dire situation in my country with regard to ensuring the functioning and capacity-building of our institutions.

Our requests and the proposals contained in the report of the Secretary-General are also in line with the recommendations of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (*A/59/565*). In its paragraph 224 the report of the High-level Panel clearly states, "failure to invest adequately in peacebuilding increases the odds that a country will relapse into conflict".

I am convinced that the Council, in its wisdom, will find the unity and resolve to provide Timor-Leste, through the United Nations and in a secure and guaranteed manner, with the modest but critical means to meet the challenges that lie before us.

I wish now to brief the Council on the joint efforts of the Governments of Timor-Leste and Indonesia to resolve some of the issues of our common past, in particular that of the reported human rights violations that occurred in 1999, in the context of the 5 May Agreement between the United Nations, Indonesia and Portugal. More than anyone else, the two Governments are conscious of the need to deal with this burden of the past in a manner that our two peoples may accept. Hence, a Commission of Truth and Friendship was established by a decision of Presidents Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Xanana Gusmao and Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri during a meeting of the three leaders in Denpassar, Bali, on 14 December 2004.

Allow me to recall that following the events of 1999, both nations have taken actions within their respective jurisdictions to respond to the well-documented reports of human rights violations. In Indonesia, an Ad-Hoc Tribunal on Human Rights Violations in East Timor was established. Its work has not ended. In the meantime, the Indonesian parliament has passed a law establishing its own truth and reconciliation commission. In Timor-Leste we have responded to the need for truth and the desire for reconciliation with the establishment of the Commission on Reception, Truth and Reconciliation, whose work has just ended. They are now preparing a final report. In Timor-Leste the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, with the full legislative and

executive powers vested in the United Nations Transitional Administrator of East Timor, created the Serious Crimes Panel, to which Mr. Hasegawa has just referred.

Justice comes in a number of forms, criminal prosecution being the most common. Retributive justice demands legal prosecution or punishment, whereby the victim is the State, and the victim a witness for the State. It is adversarial and focused on the past. Restorative justice — the main focus of truth commissions — is about people, where the victims are the primary concern and not simply witnesses, and the perpetrator is compelled to truth.

Timor-Leste requires the focus to be on restorative justice so that primary attention is given to people, participation, dialogue, needs and the future. Our past is both tragic and bloody; if we are to reach back into the past, how far do we go?

The greatest act of justice and blessing bestowed on the people of East Timor is our freedom. Today we are free. That is justice, for there can be no greater justice than our freedom.

Indonesia, too, is free as never before and is beginning to take steps to confront its own past in order to extricate itself from a pervasive culture of violence, abuse and impunity. Tens of thousands of Indonesians were jailed, killed, tortured, branded as "communists" and stigmatized for most of their lives. Hence, Indonesia, in its national parliament, adopted its own truth and reconciliation law.

Timor-Leste and Indonesia have a long way to go towards consolidating democracy and the rule of law. Timor-Leste is starting anew, from the ashes of the violence of 1999. Indonesia, too, is starting anew, and is struggling to reform its judiciary and armed forces.

Indonesia is the largest Muslim country in the world, home to 230 million people; and now it is the third largest democracy, however imperfect. In 2004, that multi-ethnic and multicultural nation went through two democratic elections, which were regarded by all impartial observers as truly free and open. Radical Islamic parties failed to make any gains. Yet, overall, the democratic experiment in Indonesia is still an incipient and fragile one, and there is no guarantee that those elements will not gain influence and, ultimately, power.

The East Timorese and the international community must accept and understand the complex challenges faced by the elected civilian leaders in Indonesia in trying to consolidate their democratic experiment with prudent reforms. Excessive outside pressure on elected civilian leaders to meet the expectations of the international community to have a credible prosecutorial and trial process — that is, the jailing of senior military officers — as desirable as that may be for some, could result in unrest within the armed forces, thus undermining stability and the entire democratic experiment in the largest Muslim country in the world.

Indonesian leaders and the Indonesian people have shown a remarkable sense of pragmatism in welcoming Timor-Leste as a sovereign, independent nation. Former President Abdurrahman Wahid visited Timor-Leste in 2000, and then President Megawati Soekarnoputri attended our independence celebration in 2002. The Indonesian military leadership has displayed overall good faith in cooperating with the United Nations civilian and military authorities in Timor-Leste since soon after their evacuation from the territory in 1999.

The several hundred armed elements that fled to Indonesian West Timor in 1999 have been deterred from destabilizing Timor-Leste thanks to the determined policy of the Indonesian Government to contribute to Timor-Leste's stability and to close cooperation between the leaderships of the peacekeeping force and the Indonesia Military Forces (TNI).

Land border demarcation talks between our two sides have progressed in record time, and have now reached some 96 per cent completion. Our two Governments are determined to finalize the land border demarcation process, but we cannot anticipate when that process will be completed.

Hundreds of individuals of East Timorese origin continue to be on the Indonesian civil service payroll, and several hundred others continue to be on active duty in the Indonesian national police and army, without suffering discrimination.

We are aware that it is impossible to satisfy the needs of all victims and that it is impossible to provide perfect justice. The cross-jurisdictional nature of the conflict in question lends support to the argument that, in this case, a Truth and Friendship Commission is best placed in a bi-national institutional context. It is time

for Timor-Leste and Indonesia to deal with our shared and turbulent past, while securing our democratic future.

Allow me briefly to share with Council members some elements of the terms of reference for our Truth and Friendship Commission, with a cautionary note that, while the document has been thoroughly reviewed at ministerial level, it still requires the signature of our two Presidents and our Prime Ministers or Foreign Ministers for it to become official and valid. We anticipate that, in the next week or two, our two Presidents and Prime Ministers will initial the terms of reference of our Truth and Friendship Commission.

Because that document runs to more or less three pages in my speech, I will simply summarize it in one minute. In the discussions of the terms of reference we have held with our Indonesian colleagues and friends, the two sides have been very conscious that the terms of reference of the Truth and Friendship Commission must, above all, be credible and must gain the acceptance of our own peoples, both in Timor-Leste and in Indonesia. Members of the joint Commission will number roughly 10; a final decision on this is to be made by the two Presidents. They will be drawn from independent individuals: academics, human rights experts, jurists and historians from both Timor-Leste and Indonesia.

Commission members will have full immunity in the conduct of their work. They will have freedom of movement in Indonesia and Timor-Leste, unrestricted access to any documentation available from existing sources — namely, from the Indonesian Ad Hoc Human Rights Tribunal, from our serious crimes process and from our Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation — and will have the authority to interview any individual in Indonesia or Timor-Leste they deem necessary to provide additional information for their work. The Commission might have one to two years of work and will finalize its work in a report submitted to our two Presidents, who will then submit it to our respective parliaments.

In deciding what would be the best mechanism for our two Governments and countries to deal with the events of the past, we for our part also took into consideration the views of many. My President and I spent a considerable amount of time consulting with church leaders, members of civil society, non-governmental organizations and all political parties represented in our parliament. We are aware that this initiative is unique. It is the first time in modern history that two countries previously in conflict have decided to deal with issues of violence through a joint Truth and Reconciliation Commission. We believe that, if this process is successful, particularly since it involves a predominantly Catholic country — one of the smallest and poorest in the world — and the largest Muslim country — a vibrant functioning democracy — it could indeed set a positive precedent for the rest of the world. It would show that, at this time of debates and so-called dialogue among civilizations, a predominantly Muslim country and a predominantly Catholic country, both from the developing world, have the courage and vision to address their shared past and bring to an end the most unhappy chapter of their past in a manner satisfactory to our peoples, first and foremost, but also meeting the expectations of the international community.

In conclusion, on behalf of my President, my Prime Minister and my people, I appeal to the Security Council to consider positively our request for one final year's extension of the United Nations mission in Timor-Leste.

I know that, for those who have served on the Security Council over the last five years, my personal credibility is not very high, because this is not the first time I have appeared here to request another six-month or one-year extension. But members are familiar with the Latin proverb, "*errare humanum est*". I have erred in the past, being on the optimistic side, thinking that by 2004 we would no longer need a peacekeeping mechanism in Timor-Leste. We are requesting one more one-year or six-month extension of the peacekeeping mechanism.

It is a very small, critical mission. We know that the Security Council faces extraordinary burdens elsewhere. But since 1999 the United Nations has made a tremendous contribution, under the Secretary-General's leadership and under the Security Council's leadership, to what today is one of the most successful United Nations stories in the world.

We do not want to, as it were, blackmail the Council with dire, dark scenarios, but the reality is that, as much as we are all — the East Timorese leadership and people, and the international community — rightly proud of the achievements, peace in East Timor and the institutions that have made that peace a reality are all

very fragile. We do not believe that a request for a six-month to one-year mission extension, to consolidate the peace that we have achieved, is asking too much.

I thank the Council; may God the almighty and merciful inspire it in its deliberations.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Ramos-Horta for the kind words addressed to me and to my country, Benin.

Mr. Oshima (Japan): Allow me first to register my Government's condolences to the Government and the people of Bangladesh over the tragic killings of Bangladeshi peacekeepers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mr. President, my delegation appreciates your convening of this public meeting concerning the situation in Timor-Leste at this important juncture in order to consider our future steps as the end of the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) approaches in a few months' time.

We thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, Mr. Hasegawa, for his comprehensive briefing. We welcome the presence at this meeting of Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, and we thank him for the statement he just made.

At the outset, we wish to note with satisfaction the tangible achievements and progress made in the overall situation in Timor-Leste, as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2005/99), especially in the improved security situation, with respect to State institutions and capacities, and in terms of promoting democracy and human rights, during UNMISET's final consolidation phase over the past year. We are pleased with the steady, positive developments being made in the country, since Japan, as a friend in Asia, has quite substantially participated in assisting Timor-Leste in the process of keeping the peace and consolidating the gains of peace, through UNMISET and other multilateral and bilateral frameworks. We would like to commend Special Representative Hasegawa and his staff, and those working on the ground, for their valuable contributions, and we express our high expectations that they will push on with their efforts, as the mission's mandate approaches its end in May, to make those achievements as solid and sustainable as possible.

The significant improvement in bilateral relations between Indonesia and Timor-Leste in recent months, as demonstrated by the initiatives taken at the highest level of Government, by President Gusmão and President Yudhoyono, is to be welcomed. We pay a high tribute to that encouraging development in their bilateral relationship, and we hope that this process will continue, because it is critically important for the future of Timor-Leste.

On the other hand, problems remain that will require serious attention from both countries. My delegation is concerned, for example, at the prospect, pointed out in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2005/99), that the delineation of the land border is unlikely to be finished by May due to the postponement of bilateral meetings. Incidents continue, including the recent incursion of an armed ex-militia group and the ensuing gunfire, despite the reported overall calm and stability in the country. We urge both sides to take steps to ensure that the border demarcation talks are brought to a successful conclusion and that border security control is enhanced through better bilateral cooperation. These measures are critically important for security in Timor-Leste, and we hope that both countries will further strengthen their efforts for an early solution of the border issue, including by the front-loading of the Indonesia-Timor-Leste Technical Subcommittee on Border Demarcation and Regulation.

Another challenge is the existence of what have been referred to as gaps in the transition process in Timor-Leste, as it strives towards its post-conflict and sustainable peacebuilding phase, which the report of the Secretary-General has identified. We take note of those findings. Against the backdrop of the substantive progress made so far, and as the United Nations peacekeeping activities enter into a final stage, calling for the redoubling of efforts for the consolidation of peace, the fact that there are still important unmet requirements in some key areas is cause for concern. If left unresolved, this situation could threaten the important gains made and could even have a potential unravelling impact, which must be avoided. But Dili itself is not able to address those problems alone; nor is bilateral donor assistance likely to be forthcoming. The Secretary-General therefore suggests, on the basis that such gaps still exist, that a reconfigured and scaled-down United Nations mission be maintained for another year. We take note of that assessment.

The international community, Japan included, has invested heavily in Timor-Leste since 1999, in helping it to find peace, consolidate its gains and stand on its own feet, and we all would like to ensure that the United Nations peacekeeping operation in Timor-Leste remains the success story that it has been. We would not want to see a reversal in the final phases of peacebuilding. Japan is therefore prepared to consider sympathetically the proposal for retaining, on the expiry of UNMISET's current mandate, some form of United Nations activities in Timor-Leste to address these gaps.

In that connection, we note that, in some post-conflict situations in other regions of the world, the termination of a United Nations peacekeeping operation has been followed by the establishment of a peacebuilding type of mission. Likewise, in the case of Timor-Leste, we believe that a small United Nations mission dedicated to peacebuilding, with the minimum required number of personnel, and authorized for a limited duration, could be a useful and pragmatic solution to the remaining problems that the country faces in its last phases of transition.

I would like to add that Japan will provide continued and strong support in Timor-Leste's nation-building effort through our bilateral aid as well, with the emphasis on sectors such as capacity and human resources development, infrastructure, agriculture and the consolidation of peace. And we will be participating actively in the development partners meeting scheduled to be held in April.

We must also address issues concerning serious crimes committed in the past in Timor-Leste, as they have close bearing on the country's future stability and development. We note that the Secretary-General has decided to establish a commission of experts in order to face squarely the issue of impunity. For the commission to function effectively, it will need to have good cooperation from the countries concerned. We strongly hope that the commission will maintain a constructive relationship with the Truth and Friendship Commission which the Governments of Timor-Leste and Indonesia have agreed to establish.

In conclusion, my Government expresses its conviction that, with continued support from the international community, particularly the United Nations, the foundations for stability and progress in Timor-Leste will be strengthened, and the people of Timor-Leste will forge ahead under their wise political leadership — particularly that of President Gusmão, Prime Minister Alkatiri and Foreign Minister Ramos-Horta — in their determination to effect nation-building that is underpinned by ownership and accountability. We must ensure that UNMISET and its successor United Nations presence see to it that the transition process continues on a smooth path, and we must spare no effort in ensuring that we leave a successful chapter in the history of United Nations peacekeeping operations in that country.

Mr. Dolgov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, I should like to associate myself with the words of condolence addressed to the Government and the people of Bangladesh following the death of peacekeepers from that country in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This tragic incident once again confirms the importance of ensuring proper security for United Nations peacekeepers as they serve and do their very important job for the entire international community.

We are grateful to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Hasegawa, for having introduced the progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) and for the very useful additional information he gave about developments in that country.

In recent months, Timor-Leste has made further progress towards self-sufficiency. We take note of the successful start-up of the process of elections to local Government bodies, the further establishment of legislative structures and the ongoing consolidation of public institutions. We deem it important that the domestic political situation in the country as a whole has remained stable.

However, we agree with the Secretary-General's conclusion that the progress achieved by the Timorese is insufficient, as Timor-Leste has not yet met the criteria for an independent State, despite the fact that the Government and the people, with the support of the United Nations, are making very intensive efforts in that area. That applies first and foremost to public administration, the police and border control.

After 20 May of this year, when UNMISET's mandate expires, the country will still require multifaceted international assistance in order to ensure security, stability and development. That is precisely

why Russia supports the recommendation of the Secretary-General — agreed to by the Government of Timor-Leste — to extend UNMISET's activities, in a scaled-down configuration, for a period of up to one year. During that period, an ongoing United Nations presence should be maintained in the country.

We welcome the improvement in Timorese-Indonesian relations, and we hope that the bilateral Truth and Friendship Commission that will soon be starting work there will help to strengthen cooperation between the two States and facilitate a speedy solution to the remaining unresolved questions, including the investigations into the serious human rights violations committed in East Timor in 1999.

The full settlement of the question of State borders is of great importance for ensuring security and sustainable development in Timor-Leste. We look forward to prompt solutions in this area that are agreeable to all parties concerned.

In conclusion, I should like to reaffirm the support of the Russian Federation for the work being done by Mr. Hasegawa and by the entire staff of the Mission he heads as they discharge the extremely important mandate of that Mission.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): I should like to join colleagues in expressing the condolences of the British Government to the Government of Bangladesh. We should never forget that, day in and day out, it is the peacekeepers, it is United Nations personnel who are actually on the front line of our efforts to establish better international peace and security.

Like other colleagues, I am grateful to the Secretary-General's Special Representative for his briefing and, indeed, to his Mission for the work they carry out. It is also a pleasure to welcome back to the Council the Foreign Minister of Timor-Leste.

The representative of Luxembourg will shortly make a statement on behalf of the European Union. I should like to align the United Kingdom with that position.

As the Secretary-General's report makes clear, the Government and the people of Timor-Leste, with the assistance of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), continue to make progress on the road towards self-reliance and self-sufficiency. But we agree with the assessment of the Secretary-General that significant challenges remain — we have heard those set out this morning — and that the provision of international assistance will therefore continue to be crucial. It is incumbent on us all to provide such assistance — be it from the United Nations, be it regional, be it bilateral.

The United Kingdom very much supports a continued United Nations presence in Timor-Leste beyond the end of UNMISET's mandate this May. What we would like to see is a successor which is small, which is tightly focused, and which is essentially a political mission concentrating on institutional capacity-building and with a clear and achievable exit strategy. I think that is the right way to go to take us in transition from the present arrangements towards a situation which East Timor very much hopes for, which is that they be able to do this entirely themselves. Until we get there, we need a Mission.

We welcome the continuing evolution of the relationship between Indonesia and Timor-Leste, including through the establishment, to which the Foreign Minister referred earlier, of the bilateral Truth and Friendship Commission. We welcome the substantial progress which is being made on the question of border demarcation, and we encourage both Governments, if indeed only 4 per cent is now outstanding, to resolve the outstanding 4 per cent as soon as possible.

Finally, I should like to reiterate our support for the commission of experts established by the Secretary-General to assess the progress made — especially how to tackle the issue of justice — and we look forward to a recommendation covering human rights and enduring, sustainable justice for Timor-Leste.

Mr. Mayoral (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I should like to express our solidarity and our condolences to the people and the Government of Bangladesh and to the families of the soldiers who died recently in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I wish also to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, for his presentation of the most recent report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). We welcome also the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, José Ramos-Horta. My

delegation is particularly pleased to see Mr. Ramos-Horta seated at the Council table, as this reflects the success of the whole process that led to the independence of Timor-Leste, which began when my country was a member of the Security Council during the period 1999-2000.

Argentina wishes to reaffirm its readiness to continue to provide assistance to Timor-Leste as it consolidates its institutions and seeks to preserve the gains it has made in the past five years, at the cost of so many sacrifices.

In the period that has elapsed since the people of Timor-Leste so courageously voted in favour of independence, the country's Government, with the assistance of the international community, has made outstanding progress in consolidating its national institutions and public administration. In that context, we congratulate the people and the authorities of Timor-Leste on everything they have done to overcome the difficult conditions that prevailed at the time of independence, thus advancing towards peace, prosperity and democracy. We also wish to express our gratitude to the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) for its work, and to all the other organs of the United Nations system that have made a significant contribution to those achievements.

As the report of the Secretary-General (S/2005/99) and the instructive briefing by Mr. Hasegawa make clear, a number of tasks remain to be completed. Timor-Leste continues to need assistance from the international community in key areas such as border control and management; establishment of a professional police service; development of key State institutions; and respect for democratic governance and human rights. Progress has been made in each of those areas. However, as the Secretary-General notes in his report, Timor-Leste has not yet reached the critical threshold of self-sufficiency.

We also welcome the significant progress made in the area of relations between Timor-Leste and its neighbours Indonesia and Australia. In the case of Indonesia, we should emphasize the good state of bilateral relations, as attested to by frequent high-level meetings between President Gusmão and Prime Minister Alkatiri of Timor-Leste on the one hand and Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono on the other. However, outstanding issues, such as the demarcation of the land border, remain. With regard to the border issues, we appeal to Timor-Leste and its neighbours to continue to work on the demarcation of the land and maritime borders and on determining how the natural resources of the continental shelf should be distributed. We believe it is essential to resolve those outstanding issues in order to enable Timor-Leste to approach the future with a stronger economic position.

We would also like to welcome the creation, just noted by the Foreign Minister of Timor-Leste, of a bilateral Truth and Friendship Commission.

As noted earlier, although there has been commendable work done by the United Nations in recent years, there is still much that remains to be done. We feel that premature withdrawal by the United Nations from Timor-Leste could have negative consequences for the future of the country, possibly jeopardizing everything that has so far been achieved, with such great effort. On other occasions, my delegation has noted the need for the Security Council to take a long-term approach, with proper assessment of the possible consequences of a hasty decision for the well-being of countries that have been working hard to build their institutions.

With that in mind, we ought to draw a lesson from the events of the 1990s in a country of my country's region — Haiti — which we hope will not be repeated in this instance. We must not forget that Timor-Leste gained its independence only in May 2002 and that much that remains to be done. The country continues to have the lowest levels of human development in Asia, and constant work is needed in the areas of health, education and other aspects of human development. In that regard, it will be essential to be able to continue to rely on international assistance in support of the Government's efforts to achieve those goals.

The view that there is a need for a continued substantive United Nations presence after UNMISET's mandate expires on 20 May 2005 is shared by the Secretary-General. His report offers details of the scale, mandate and features that the mission would have. My delegation supports those recommendations and is prepared to work constructively to achieve consensus within the Security Council with a view to establishing a United Nations mission along the lines suggested by the Secretary-General and by the Timor-Leste authorities.

In the short time that has elapsed since 1999, the people of Timor-Leste have shown the international community their devotion to peace and democracy and their courageous determination to build a prosperous nation. Argentina considers that the international community should continue to lend its support to Timorese institution-building. Withdrawing the participation of the United Nations from that process too soon could imperil the achievements and the significant investment that the international community has made in Timor-Leste.

Mr. Faaborg-Andersen (Denmark): Like other colleagues, I would like to convey our heartfelt condolences to the Government and the people of Bangladesh on the tragic death of nine peacekeepers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I would like to thank Special Representative Sukehiro Hasegawa for his comprehensive briefing and to commend him for his excellent work. I also welcome the Foreign Minister of Timor-Leste to the Security Council.

Denmark associates itself with the statement that the representative of Luxembourg will make on behalf of the European Union.

It is very promising that the positive developments and progress in Timor-Leste have continued during the past three months. The democratic process has been further consolidated by the holding of local elections and by the National Parliament's law-making process. We welcome the Government's efforts to fulfil its reporting obligations under international human rights instruments and, in that respect, we urge the Government to urgently select the Provedor for Human Rights and Justice.

The presence in Timor-Leste of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) has been an important stabilizing factor, and UNMISET has ensured significant progress in institution-building. But much still remains to be done in key areas such as capacity-building in the public sector and the consolidation of a legal framework. The task for UNMISET now is to complete a smooth transition from a peacekeeping to a peacebuilding operation that can ensure a sustainable development assistance framework.

It is clear, as described by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2005/99), that Timor-Leste will need the support of the United Nations system also after the termination of UNMISET's mandate. My Government supports a continued United Nations presence in Timor-Leste in order to successfully complete the work the Council initiated in 1999. In that respect, we note the Secretary-General's recommendations for a restructured mission and look forward to further discussion in the Council of those recommendations.

In considering future United Nations assistance to Timor-Leste, including on capacity-building in the public sector, my Government will support an approach based on national ownership that places Timor-Leste in the driver's seat. The number of international United Nations advisers must be reduced over the coming months to give room for the Timorese to assert their leadership.

My Government has noted with great satisfaction the improved relationship between Timor-Leste and Indonesia. It is our hope that the improved relationship will soon be translated into concrete progress on the delineation of the two countries' common land border. We urge the two parties to spare no effort to resolve the pending issues.

Denmark fully shares the view of the Secretary-General that the issue of serious crimes committed in Timor-Leste in 1999 is a concern not only for the two countries, but also for the international community at large. The fight against impunity is of outmost importance, and the perpetrators of those crimes must be brought to justice.

My Government therefore welcomes the Secretary-General's decision, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1573 (2004), to establish a commission of experts to conduct a thorough assessment of the progress made in the legal proceedings at the two national human rights tribunals in Jakarta and Dili respectively. We strongly urge the two parties to fully cooperate with the expert commission.

Denmark also welcomes the formation of a bilateral Truth and Friendship Commission by Indonesia and Timor-Leste and hopes that the Commission will further contribute to progress in the fight against impunity.

Mr. Vassilakis (Greece): Allow me first to express our deep condolences to the Government of

Bangladesh for the loss of eight of its peacekeepers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, for introducing the Secretary-General's report and updating the Council on the situation in Timor-Leste.

Greece fully aligns itself with the statement to be made later by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union.

I would also like to welcome among us the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste. It is always a pleasure to have him here.

Since independence in 2002, there is no doubt that remarkable progress has been made in Timor-Leste, primarily due to the determination and the efforts of its citizens and the Timorese Government. The role of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor has been a central one in the preservation of peace and stability in the country. We are grateful for the hard work of all its personnel, as well as of all the development and humanitarian agencies and financial institutions of the United Nations system involved in the economic reconstruction, social advancement and general peacebuilding efforts in the country.

The Secretary-General, in his report, records the current positive developments in the overall internal situation in Timor-Leste, as well as the continued positive trends in the country's relations with Indonesia. We warmly welcome all steps towards peace and reconciliation between the two neighbours. In that context, the establishment of the Truth and Friendship Commission is of particular importance. Dealing with the difficult problems of the past, especially human rights violations, and ending the perpetrators' impunity are necessary measures in order to create a solid base of confidence and stable conditions for further improvement in their relations. The Secretary-General's decision to establish a commission of experts to assist the parties in their quest for justice and reconciliation is highly commendable in that regard.

The bitter past is behind them. The Timorese people can now focus on building their country and improving the conditions of everyday life, especially in the health, nutrition and education sectors. As in all similar cases, there is a lot still to be done. Establishing sustainable State institutions, including in the judicial and financial sectors, border management and control, law enforcement, respect of human rights, and the promotion of democratic governance and rule of law.

Timor-Leste and its people have traveled a long way in the past five years and the presence and assistance of the international community have been of crucial importance in the successful outcome of their efforts. The journey is not over yet. Dealing with the remaining challenges requires additional help on the part of the international community. The Timorese ask for that help and the Secretary-General thinks that it is necessary.

In this case, Greece believes that the request for help cannot and should not go unanswered. The international community has invested a lot of money and effort in making Timor-Leste a success story. We should not allow it to falter at the last stages.

There are various ideas about how to continue providing assistance. We need to explore all available options and come up with the one most suitable, under the circumstances, so that the people of Timor-Leste can enjoy every chance to consolidate their achievements and successfully pursue their quest for peace, stability and development towards they future they dream of and deserve. The Secretary-General has submitted some proposals. Greece would have no difficulties supporting them.

Mr. Baja (Philippines): We thank you, Sir, for convening this public meeting on Timor-Leste. We also join the members of the Council in extending condolences to the Government and people of Bangladesh over the tragic deaths of their peacekeepers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We acknowledge the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste.

I also wish to thank Mr. Hasegawa, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his comprehensive briefing on political, diplomatic and economic developments in Timor-Leste. Indeed, considerable rewards have been and are still being reaped from the significant investment in Timor-Leste by the international community, judging from the political progress that has been achieved and the relative calm and stability now prevailing there. We also acknowledge the efforts being exerted by the Timorese throughout the process and their determination to increase their involvement and

ownership in the strengthening of their political, legal and security institutions.

We also welcome the continuing improvement in the relations of Timor-Leste with its neighbours, particularly Indonesia, recently culminating in an agreement to form a Truth and Friendship Commission that would address the human rights abuses perpetrated in 1999.

My delegation takes note of the findings of the eight transition working groups, contained in the Secretary-General's report, and the conclusions and recommendations stemming from those findings.

The international community should heed the wise caution of the Secretary-General against jeopardizing the achievements that have been made through the political and resource investments of the international community in Timor-Leste. The Secretary-General's recommendation for a reconfigured and scaled-down Mission will be supported by my delegation during the forthcoming negotiations for a new mission in Timor-Leste. During this transition period, the country will require a substantial number of international personnel both to fill the gaps in the administration and to address continuing capacity-building. As the Foreign Minister of Timor-Leste said, that would be better ensured by systematic and guaranteed United Nations assistance than by bilateral development assistance.

The present stage of Timor-Leste's development dictates that the heavy investment poured into establishing peace and keeping it can be preserved only by a sustainable socio-economic development framework for Timor-Leste. A peaceful, free and strong country will require economic self-sufficiency. In the medium to long terms, that is the new phase of investment that the international community should focus on in assisting Timor-Leste. We welcome the information given by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General about the petroleum fund, and in that regard I would like to ask him for information on any developments on the matter of the maritime boundary of Timor-Leste with Australia. That has been discussed in the past and is of interest to the international community, as it would have a significant effect on the future economic self-sufficiency of Timor-Leste and its capacity to address the many political and socio-economic challenges it faces.

Finally, my delegation notes the creation of the United Nations commission of experts tasked to review the progress made on human rights and serious crimes. That is one of the most sensitive issues and we hope the commission will be able to come up with positive recommendations on the matter. External intervention always needs the cooperation of parties, including the existing institutions and processes concerned, to be fully effective. The history of the United Nations intervention in Timor-Leste reflects a partnership with the Timorese and cooperation by Indonesia. Ultimately, the commission's success will be determined by the common goals underpinning it and the engagement and support of the parties concerned.

Mr. Benmehidi (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): I should like to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste, Mr. José Ramos-Horta, and to thank him for his important statement. I also thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Hasegawa, for his clear and detailed introduction of the Secretary-General's report on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET).

My delegation welcomes the significant progress that has been made in Timor-Leste during UNMISET's consolidation phase. That progress is reflected in the establishment of stable institutions, the holding of the first local elections, the adoption by Parliament of a number of legislative measures, and the implementation of steps to resolve the problem of former combatants.

Timor-Leste has continued to make progress in establishing its institutions and the rule of law, thanks to the commitment and resolve of its leaders and the people of Timor-Leste. With the assistance of UNMISET and bilateral and multilateral aid, the capacities of the public administration and judicial systems and of the security bodies have expanded and become stronger. We are pleased that relations between Timor-Leste and its neighbours have improved steadily. In that regard, we particularly welcome the good relations between Timor-Leste and Indonesia. We call upon them to expand their bilateral cooperation in order to resolve outstanding issues, including the important problem of border demarcation. We also hope that an agreement will soon be concluded between Australia and Timor-Leste with regard to the exploitation of mineral resources in the Timor Sea.

We note from the report of the Secretary-General that many tasks in important sectors are yet to be completed. In that regard, we believe that international assistance remains critical to the long-term security and stability of the country, as well as to its sustainable development, especially in the areas identified by the transition working groups — including in border management and control, the training of a professional police force, the development of State institutions and respect for democratic governance and human rights.

Given the conclusions made by the Secretary-General after a review of all the recent developments, Timor-Leste has not yet reached the critical threshold of self-sufficiency. International assistance therefore remains vital. My delegation supports the recommendation of the Secretary-General to maintain UNMISET, with reduced personnel, for an additional period so that it may complete its tasks and build upon the progress already achieved.

It is incumbent upon the international community to continue to lend its assistance to the development of Timor-Leste and to participate in its economic reconstruction. We are convinced that, thanks to the efforts of the Government and people of Timor-Leste, along with the support of the United Nations and the international community, Timor-Leste will continue to make progress in nation-building.

Mr. Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania): We extend our condolences to the Government of Bangladesh and the families of the peacekeepers who were killed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo last week. That tragic development should receive due attention from the Council.

We welcome the presence in the Council this morning of Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. I should also thank Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, Special Representative of the Secretary General for Timor-Leste, for presenting the progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in Timor-Leste (UNMISET).

The overarching message of the report is the prevailing calm and stability in Timor-Leste. The reported security incidents appear routine and characteristic of the formative stages of nationhood for a country emerging from violent conflict.

Timor-Leste is making steady and sure progress towards democracy, as demonstrated by the successful and popularly backed local elections in the districts of Bobonaro and Oecussi. Those elections will serve as an example for the coming elections in other districts that are scheduled for later this year. The National Parliament has embarked upon a serious agenda of enacting vital pieces of legislation that define, and lay the foundation for, systems of political accountability, the rule of law, justice, respect for human rights and a modern public administration.

The report of the Secretary-General provides useful benchmarks for assessing the performance of the mandate of UNMISET as it implements resolution 1573 (2004). In the short period since independence, the Government and people of Timor-Leste have scored all-round positive achievements, in partnership with the United Nations Mission of Support and other multilateral and bilateral partners. Nonetheless, as the UNMISET mandate expires, on 20 May 2005, there remains business in critical areas that must be finished to permit a seamless take-off to institutionalized self-sufficiency in Timor-Leste.

The key areas identified by the working groups as yet to be consolidated deserve particular attention from the Council. The top leadership of Timor-Leste has confirmed its need for support. It has also requested the support of several heads of State and Government, including members of the Council, to continue the presence of UNMISET for one more year, to 20 May 2006. The Secretary-General's recommendation for a scaled-down structure in response to needs, and for the sake of continuity, is a reasonable, appropriate investment in the stability of Timor-Leste. The maintenance of law and order and justice is the cornerstone of a convulsing fractured society determined to live in peace with itself and its neighbour, Indonesia.

The judiciary and the police are vital State organs whose future must be firmly anchored in sustainable professional expertise and operational capacities. Developing specialized competencies and skills, such as through training of competent judges and forensic experts, will obviously take longer than the requested extended duration of UNMISET. It will also require longer-term advisers.

We note with interest the measures taken at the highest level by both Timor-Leste and Indonesia to

fight impunity in relation to the serious crimes committed in 1999, in accordance with resolution 1573 (2004). The establishment of the Truth and Friendship Commission is a positive development in that direction. We hope that the judicial processes in both Dili and Jakarta, established in connection with the serious crimes committed in 1999, will work closely with the Secretary-General's newly established commission of experts.

The security and management of the Tactical Coordination Line at the border requires a political and legal framework, of which the authorities in the two countries are very much aware. They should be encouraged in those constructive initiatives. On the ground, progress in training the Border Police Unit is satisfactory, but it requires more expertise. The enhancement of the work of the Timorese defence forces, including the required liaison services, should continue beyond 2005, as specified in the Secretary-General's report.

Timor-Leste will continue to require multilateral and bilateral international assistance in other areas of public administration and in the development role in general. The pledges that have been made in those areas need to be implemented. The adjustment of the residual UNMISET presence for another 12 months after May this year will then be made accordingly as part of the exit strategy.

In conclusion, we should acknowledge, and take pride in, the fact that the successes recorded by Timor-Leste thus far are synonymous with the successes of the United Nations and the international community as whole. The opposite would be true if Timor-Leste were to slide back for lack of assistance at this critical juncture.

Mr. Valle (Brazil): My delegation extends its deepest sympathy to the victims and families of the peacekeepers deceased in the tragic events that took place last Friday in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We also extend the same sentiments to the Government of Bangladesh.

I would like to thank Mr. Hasegawa for his briefing on the situation in Timor-Leste and on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). I would like to thank him in particular for his presentation of the recommendations of the Secretary-General regarding UNMISET's mandate. I also express my gratitude to Foreign Minister José Ramos-Horta for having shared his Government's views regarding the challenges ahead and the need for a continued United Nations presence in Timor-Leste. Before I express my delegation's preliminary views on those recommendations — and taking into account the concerns expressed by Foreign Minister Ramos-Horta — I deem it useful to make a brief assessment of the current situation.

First, it must be underlined that, during the past six years, the people and the authorities of Timor-Leste have been able to achieve quite promising progress concerning the consolidation of the Timorese State and its institutions. That improvement is even more evident when compared with the achievements in similar situations during the same period of time. The progress achieved is the best guarantee for peace and stability in the region. My delegation believes that the strong and unequivocal commitment of the international community to the advancement of the cause of Timorese independence constitutes an important component of the success story of Timor-Leste.

As recognized in the Secretary-General's report, most State institutions and other relevant structures in Timor-Leste were put in place thanks to an integrated and comprehensive strategy, conceived under the auspices of the United Nations and closely followed by the Security Council, that has benefited from the active support of the international community.

Secondly, it must be pointed out that despite that undisputable progress, the integrated and comprehensive strategy conceived by the Security Council for Timor-Leste has not yet borne all its fruit. Timor-Leste still faces considerable shortfalls and limitations in terms of the capacity of its Government and people to fully exercise their sovereignty and independence in a sustainable manner. Timor-Leste's vulnerability is evident in its dependence on expatriate advisers, foreign economic aid and external assistance to provide for almost all types of public goods and services, from public planning and administration to emergency security in case of imminent risk or threat.

In view of that, it is unlikely that Timor-Leste will be in a position in May 2005 to assume by itself the burden of consolidating State institutions and promoting its recently achieved democratic status without outside help. Consequently, the Council should reaffirm its commitment to peace and stability in that country, as was done in 1999. It should reaffirm its

commitment to the same long-term, integrated and comprehensive strategy aimed at consolidating Timorese independence. The withdrawal of the United Nations from Timor-Leste at this time would lead to setbacks that would put at risk the achievements accomplished so far. We cannot afford to let that happen.

Our assessment recommends that appropriate adjustments be made to the Security Council's previous strategy, taking into account the progress achieved and the existing vulnerabilities. My delegation looks forward to engaging in talks with all Council delegations as well as the Secretariat, Mr. Hasegawa, members of the core group on Timor-Leste and other interested parties, such as the international financial institutions and agencies of the United Nations system, in order to facilitate the development of a new strategy.

We are open and flexible, but firm, when it comes to the need to be constructive, objective, responsible and far-sighted. Peace and development are interconnected and require the renewed commitment of the international community. My delegation suggests that we should commence by trying to build a consensus on the evaluation of the current situation in Timor-Leste. We should also try to reach common ground regarding the level and nature of the threats now facing the country. We count on the very good work being done by the transitional working groups, devoted mainly to the various aspects related to civil administration and public institutions. Only when we have achieved that will we be in a position to move to a substantive discussion on ways and means to address Timor-Leste's problems and to elaborate a new strategy to guide the international and United Nations presences in the country. We should broaden our perspective so as to encompass in our strategy the concern related to post-conflict situations highlighted by the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change.

My delegation strongly believes that next May, when the Council decides on the future of UNMISET, most of the Secretary-General's recommendations should be adopted, including the reference to civilian advisers in key positions, the continuation of training in some of the national security agencies and maintenance of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and his Office. In our opinion, they are essential in order to marshal international efforts in the best interests of Timor-Leste.

Finally, I wish to emphasize that the continued United Nations presence in Timor-Leste after May 2005 should maintain its most important characteristic: its multilateral, comprehensive and goal-oriented nature. As part of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries, Brazil is fully committed to the future of Timor-Leste. We are proud to announce that a number of recent bilateral initiatives have been launched to enhance cooperation — particularly in the field of capacity-building and training — in the area of justice and in the military sector, and that many more ongoing bilateral efforts are being pursued.

Mr. Fendrick (United States of America): The United States would also like to associate itself with the condolences offered to Bangladesh for the loss of its peacekeepers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo last week.

We welcome the Secretary-General's latest report on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) and Special Representative Hasegawa's presentation to the Council. We would also like to welcome His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste, for his presence today.

UNMISET has helped Timor-Leste make substantial progress since its independence almost three years ago. We fully appreciate the challenges that Timor-Leste will continue to face as a new State. Timor-Leste will continue to need concrete support from its friends, including the United Nations, for some time to come. Any additional United Nations assistance should focus on a few key areas: developing the capacity of judicial and economic institutions; continued police training, including human rights sensitivity training; and promoting further political development by fostering the growth of a diverse political party system.

Several recent developments shed light on the need for further institutional and political development. The United States was particularly concerned about the dismissal in January of 22 local judges in Timor-Leste, the resulting short-term loss of judicial capacity and the long-term implications for the development of a working judiciary. In addition, the reports of continued disregard for international human rights standards by Timorese police warrant the Council's attention. Furthermore, the postponement by the Government of Timor-Leste of bilateral negotiations with Indonesia on

their common border until June 2005 creates concern about the perceived urgency of border delineation. Finally, we remain committed to achieving credible accountability for the crimes committed against humanity in 1999, and we welcome the Secretary-General's establishment of a commission of experts to review the current judicial processes and to recommend next steps.

As one of Timor-Leste's largest bilateral donors, we have focused our assistance on rehabilitating the local economy, promoting a free and open economy, land reform, strengthening democracy, improving the judicial sector and training the police and military forces. We will continue to explore ways in which we can help Timor-Leste bilaterally to fill its needs in the key areas identified by its Government — border control, police advisers and civilian advisers — and we are encouraging other concerned Governments to do the same. The United States and other friends of Timor-Leste have police adviser and training programmes that will fill some of the gap as United Nations civilian police leave, and we plan to continue our police training programme in Timor-Leste after UNMISET concludes its work in May 2005.

It is clear to us that the peacekeeping phase of Timor-Leste's path to full self-sufficiency can now be successfully concluded. This transition from peacekeeping to a sustainable development framework represents an extremely significant and positive milestone in Timor-Leste's history. There is no longer a threat to international peace and security requiring a peacekeeping mission, and the relations between Timor-Leste and Indonesia are improving. We believe that UNMISET should conclude as scheduled in May this year and that the United Nations and regional and international partners should look at alternative ways in which to fill critical institutional gaps. We would be open to considering for a discrete, limited period a non-peacekeeping United Nations mission such as a special political mission focused on Timor-Leste's most critical needs and structured to transfer skills as rapidly as possible.

It is important that the Government of Timor-Leste take increasing responsibility for the nation's future. Part of the process will be determining precisely what international assistance is needed in each of the areas identified by the Government and by the Secretary-General. Regarding police advisers, civilian advisers and military liaison officers, more modest United Nations support in each of those areas may be sufficient and in keeping with our goal of turning over more responsibility to the Timor-Leste Government.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, please allow me to express my condolences to the Government and the people of Bangladesh with regard to the peacekeepers who were killed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. My condolences go also to the families of the victims.

The Chinese delegation welcomes the presence at today's public meeting of His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, and thanks the Secretary-General for his report (S/2005/99) on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). Our thanks go also to Mr. Hasegawa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, for his briefing.

We are pleased to see that over the past several months, the overall situation of Timor-Leste has remained stable. Local elections have been successfully held in two districts and some important pieces of legislation are in the pipeline. All of this demonstrates that political and legal institutions are being built and strengthened, and that the country's capacity for governance is continually improving.

Moreover, Timor-Leste remains committed to the development of good relations and cooperation with its neighbours and is determined to properly settle the outstanding issues in the interest of the lasting stability of the region, as well as in its own long-term interests. Such political wisdom and strategic vision are commendable. On this occasion, we wish to congratulate the Government and the people of Timor-Leste on the encouraging progress achieved and to express our appreciation to UNMISET for the positive role it has played.

On the other hand, as pointed out by the Secretary-General in his report, Timor-Leste still faces serious challenges on many fronts, especially in such areas as State administration, the development of a national police force, democratic governance and human rights safeguards. There is still a need for international assistance and support. The leaders of Timor-Leste have made the relevant requests to the members of the Council, and China fully understands those requests.

It was with United Nations support that Timor-Leste achieved its independence and embarked on the path of peaceful nation-building five years ago with the generous support of the United Nations and the international community as a whole. The people and the Government of Timor-Leste has exerted strenuous effort to achieve the results that we witness today, which are described by all as a United Nations success story in Timor-Leste.

However, as the youngest and least developed nation in Asia, Timor-Leste is like a toddler who may still falter after taking an encouraging first step. We should not only help it to stand firmly on its own legs, but should also accompany it for some time in the journey ahead. We all know that United Nations support for Timor-Leste will come to an end some day, but we sincerely hope that the Timor-Leste success story will last forever. Therefore, we call on the Security Council to learn from past experience and give serious consideration to the requests of Timor-Leste and to the proposal of the Secretary-General, and to promptly reach consensus before 20 May of this year regarding continued United Nations support for Timor-Leste so as to ensure the lasting development and stability of that country.

Mr. Duclos (France) (*spoke in French*): I, too, wish to convey my country's condolences to Bangladesh.

The Permanent Representative of Luxembourg will shortly be making a statement on behalf of the presidency of the European Union. My delegation fully associates itself with that statement.

Allow me also to thank Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa for his briefing and for the work he is doing in the field, which we highly appreciate. I would also like to express my gratitude to Mr. José Ramos-Horta, whose presence does us honour. We listened very carefully to his statement.

Allow me to say that we agree with the Secretary-General's analysis on progress made over the past 12 months in establishing solid State institutions and in promoting democracy and human rights. Major progress still remains to be made in several areas: border control and delineation; the strengthening of public administration and State institutions; economic self-sufficiency; and respect for good governance and human rights. Thus, it is clear that international support remains necessary, and that is what the Timorese authorities are requesting.

Accordingly, we will be favourably considering the proposals of the Secretary-General on maintaining a United Nations presence in Timor-Leste. But in this phase of peacebuilding, the United Nations should not act alone. The Timorese authorities must keep up their commitment, without which peacebuilding cannot occur. Several bilateral and multilateral partners — I am thinking in particular of the international financial institutions — should increase their support in order to allow for a smooth transition towards full stability.

At a time when UNMISET is preparing to complete its drawdown, the enormous progress that it has made possible since it was established in May 2002, when Timor-Leste gained independence, must be recognized. Stabilization is not complete, but it is well under way. Much remains to be done, and a United Nations presence must be maintained for some time to come. The level of United Nations presence must take account of the work done by UNMISET, which most definitely was a success story.

Mr. Dumitru (Romania): Allow me first of all to convey my Government's condolences to the Government and the people of Bangladesh on the tragic deaths of nine peacekeepers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I would like now to welcome Foreign Minister José Ramos-Horta, and, through him, to congratulate the Timor-Leste authorities on the steady progress they have achieved in putting the country firmly on the path to becoming a stable and democratic nation.

I also join other members of the Council in thanking the Secretary-General for his latest report (S/2005/99) on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) and the Special Representative, Sukehiro Hasegawa, for his briefing.

As Romania aligns itself with the statement to be made shortly by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union, I would like to confine myself here to only a few specific comments.

First, I want to say how encouraged we are by the remarkable progress achieved in Timor-Leste in a wide range of sectors, as highlighted by the Secretary-General in his report.

I would like also to reiterate Romania's commendation of the continued improvement of cooperation between Timor-Leste and Indonesia. We hope that that strong political commitment will make possible further progress on the delineation of the land border between the two countries.

It is also in this context that Romania welcomes the agreement between Timor-Leste and Indonesia to establish the Truth and Friendship Commission as an important concrete step forward in the consolidation of bilateral relations, including in the field of fighting impunity. Meanwhile, we consider the Secretary-General's recent decision to establish an independent commission of experts to conduct an assessment of the prosecution of serious crimes in Timor Leste a very welcome initiative, with the potential to make a difference to the overall efforts to put an end to impunity. Our assessment is that these two new structures — the commission of experts and the Truth and Friendship Commission — could and should coordinate their activities in the common effort to address the issue of serious crimes committed in 1999.

Turning to the role of UNMISET, we consider that its contribution to upholding governmental capacity-building efforts is outstanding. We congratulate the Mission, under the inspiring leadership of Special Representative Hasegawa, on the effective discharge of its mandate, including matters relating to the gradual transfer of ownership of the process to the Timorese, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1573 (2004).

We have taken due note of the Secretary-General's assessment regarding the challenges that remain and that require additional international assistance beyond the expiration of UNMISET's mandate on 20 May 2005. Undoubtedly, building adequate capacity to manage border affairs, increasing the professionalism and accountability of the police service, consolidating key State institutions and further enhancing respect for the rule of law and human rights are all among the vital areas in which self-sufficiency cannot be reached without continued international assistance.

The Security Council, bilateral donors and the wider international community have so far made an enormous investment in Timor-Leste. The achievements made by that country are remarkable. Yet these gains must be consolidated and their irreversibility must be safeguarded. The Government and people of Timor-Leste have proved their strong commitment to peace and the development of their country. Their strong pledge must be matched by the firm and long-term commitment of the international community in order to secure the confirmation of Timor-Leste as a notable success of United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

Accordingly, Romania favours the ongoing support of the international community in Timor-Leste beyond the expiration of UNMISET's mandate. We consider that the recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his most recent report will be a solid basis for further discussions in the Security Council on the identification of the best formula for continued United Nations assistance to Timor-Leste.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Benin.

Benin joins in the expression of condolences to Bangladesh and of sympathy to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to the families of the soldiers who fell on the field of honour in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I too would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, for the introduction he gave us this morning to the progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) and for his personal account of developments in Timor-Leste.

My delegation is pleased at the ongoing progress being made by this young State in strengthening its institutions. We congratulate the Government and people of Timor-Leste on having kept up the momentum of the transition since the country acceded to national sovereignty. We encourage them to stay the course and continue to work hard, fully mindful of the prospect of the withdrawal of the United Nations Mission.

In this respect, the Secretary-General's report describes not merely progress made but also challenges for the short- and medium-terms in UNMISET's main areas of operation to make the process of building a democratic nation irreversible and to deal with the difficulties involved in the transition from a period of

providing emergency assistance to a period of promoting sustainable socio-economic development.

In particular, we welcome the success of the local elections and the continuing strengthening of the legislative bodies. However, the persistence of the latent confrontation between the police and the army, the lack of professionalism among law enforcement forces and human rights violations are of concern to us, as is the lack of progress in the area of border demarcation.

These issues show that there are still difficulties and risks endangering the transition process in Timor-Leste, and they are a challenge to the international community. The international community must continue to support the efforts being made by that country to resolve the many problems it faces in the particularly crucial areas of security and defence, the establishment and consolidation of political institutions, the civil service and the improvement and maintenance of good neighbourly relations with Indonesia and Australia.

With regard to the assessments made by the Secretary-General in his report, Benin supports the idea of keeping a United Nations presence in Timor-Leste after 20 May 2005 and will take an active part in discussions about the form and modalities for that presence. In our view, that presence should be defined through taking thorough account of the context and of the capacity of the Timorese to meet the challenges that have been identified, using their own resources.

We believe that the withdrawal of UNMISET, which was set by resolution 1543 (2004), should be gradual and should take place in a way so as to not compromise what has been achieved in the essential sectors covered by the Mission.

The continuation of training programmes for the civil service and the judiciary, as well as in connection with the prosecution of serious crimes, may be decisive in strengthening the bases of the rule of law in the country. Benin cannot endorse any mechanical interruption of training courses just because the Mission that initiated them has reached the end of its mandate.

The international community must also resolutely continue to fight impunity and make sure that all persons who committed serious crimes during the violence of 1999 answer for their actions. The question of bringing to justice the 304 indictees living outside of Timor-Leste is a real challenge. We welcome here the establishment in February by the Secretary-General of the independent United Nations commission responsible, inter alia, for assessing progress made by the tribunals in Jakarta and Dili in dealing with their caseloads.

Furthermore, the exit strategy for UNMISET must be based on follow-up on assistance that might be provided by the United Nations funds and programmes.

In conclusion, we appeal to the international community to remain committed to Timor-Leste, because, despite the great efforts that have been made, a lot still remains to be done. Timor-Leste still needs international assistance.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Australia, on whom I call.

Mr. Dauth (Australia): Mr. President, let me also immediately associate ourselves with the expressions of condolences to the Government and people of Bangladesh and to the families of the Bangladeshi peacekeepers killed while serving with the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Thank you, Sir, for convening this open meeting. Let me also join others in welcoming my friend, the Foreign Minister of East Timor, Mr. Ramos-Horta, who is with us today. I also want to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary General, Mr. Hasegawa, for updating the Council on developments and for the excellent work he has done since his appointment.

It is clear that Timor-Leste has come a long way since achieving independence. A great deal — indeed, far and away the majority — of the credit must go to the determination and hard work of the people and the leaders of Timor-Leste. It is very good to have such a distinguished representative of the leadership with us today.

At the same time, the Council itself, and the United Nations membership more broadly, should be proud of the United Nations role in assisting Timor-Leste. As the report of the Secretary-General (S/2005/99) shows, the United Nations Mission of

Support in East Timor (UNMISET), over the past 12 months, has contributed to the further consolidation of the transition to a democratic and peaceful Timor-Leste.

Australia is also proud of what it has done to assist Timor-Leste in building a stable and sustainable society. We have been a major supporter of UNMISET's operations and continue to provide a significant programme of bilateral assistance. Together with the United Nations and with other neighbours of Timor-Leste, Australia has a big stake here in ensuring that Timor-Leste is equipped to meet the challenges that it faces. We particularly commend the efforts of the Governments of Timor-Leste and Indonesia in developing productive relations and a cooperative approach to border management issues. The development of close relations with its neighbours will be crucial to Timor-Leste's long-term stability.

Although Timor Leste has made commendable progress, clearly it requires the continued support of its neighbours and of the international community. Thus Australia would like to see a continuation of United Nations involvement in Timor-Leste, beyond 20 May 2005, when UNMISET's mandate expires, to safeguard the considerable investment made by the international community.

However, in our view, the current external security environment in Timor-Leste does not warrant a continuation of peacekeepers on the border. Australia's preference is therefore for a continued United Nations presence to concentrate efforts on essential nation-building tasks, especially in capacity-building for Government institutions, development of police and security forces and the strengthening of the law and justice systems.

In any future United Nations mission in Timor-Leste, a Special Representative of the Secretary-General should continue to report to the Security Council, which would retain oversight of the situation in Timor-Leste. The mission should also continue to be funded from the regular United Nations budget. We note that there would be no military costs involved under our preferred approach. It will be more important to ensure that essential civilian positions are adequately funded.

UNMISET has clearly made a significant contribution to building a capable and vibrant democracy in Timor Leste. But the current challenges facing Timor Leste require a new approach. It is our view that a continued United Nations presence post-UNMISET should focus on the key areas of capacity-building and governance.

Australia has been a significant contributor to United Nations efforts in support of our close friend and neighbour. As in the past, Australia can be relied upon to maintain its contribution in proportionate terms to any future United Nations presence in East Timor, however, the Council should decide how to proceed.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker is the representative of Luxembourg. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Hoscheit (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Bulgaria, Romania, and Croatia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro and the European Fair Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

Allow me first to associate myself with the condolences expressed here today concerning the death of Bangladeshi members of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Since the Security Council last dealt with the question of Timor-Leste, the overall political situation has remained calm and stable. We congratulate the Government of Timor-Leste on the tangible progress achieved in adopting key legislation, in establishing State institutions and in holding successful local elections in two districts, the first elections ever organized by the Timorese authorities. We also welcome the Government's efforts to meet its human rights treaty obligations under international law, and to further improve the relationship between the armed forces and the police through legislative measures which are currently being prepared.

Lastly, the European Union would like to welcome the steady improvement in the relations between Timor-Leste and Indonesia. We hope that the increased number of high-level meetings will lead, in

particular, to progress on the delineation of their common land border.

While we note that a Truth and Friendship Commission will shortly be established to deal with human rights violations perpetrated in 1999, we remain concerned at the lack of progress in the fight against impunity. Those responsible for serious crimes committed in Timor-Leste in 1999 must be held accountable for their actions, in conformity with Security Council resolution 1573 (2004). In that context, the European Union welcomes the establishment by the Secretary-General of a commission of experts to assess the progress made by the Indonesian and Timorese judicial authorities.

The European Union commends the invaluable contribution of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) in ensuring a smooth transition from peacekeeping to a sustainable development framework. I take this opportunity to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, for his excellent work.

While tangible progress has been achieved in many areas during UNMISET's consolidation phase, which started in May 2004, we nevertheless share the assessment of the Secretary-General that significant challenges remain, and that the provision of international assistance beyond the expiration of UNMISET's current mandate on 20 May 2005 will be crucial for the long-term security, stability and sustainable development of Timor-Leste. Factors such as the rapid population growth, combined with a stagnant economy, could endanger the long-term stability of the country. Continued assistance from the international donor community will therefore be essential to strengthen the Government's capacity to promote sustainable economic growth and employment within a dynamic private sector.

For those reasons, the European Union supports an adequate continued United Nations presence in Timor-Leste after the expiration of UNMISET's mandate.

The States members of the European Union and the European Commission have provided vital assistance to Timor-Leste, contributing half of the external assistance given to the country since 1999, in the amount of €638 million. The support provided by the Union covers all sectors, and includes budget support. The contributions of the European Union to the Trust Fund for East Timor have represented almost two thirds of the total financial envelope, while budget support from the Union has represented one third of the international community's total budget support. The European Commission has committed €180 million to support rehabilitation and development efforts in a wide range of sectors, through the Trust Fund for East Timor and international agencies and organizations, in particular the United Nations.

Moreover, as a new member of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States, Timor-Leste, in the near future, will benefit from the European Development Fund, which supports members of the cooperation agreement between the European Union and the ACP — the Cotonou Agreement. In that context, financial aid in the amount of €18 million has been proposed for Timor-Leste for 2006-2007.

Let me conclude by reiterating the European Union's great appreciation of Timor-Leste's efforts to build a self-sustained nation based on the rule of law as well as on a democratic and corruption-free society. The European Union will remain a steady partner in that endeavour.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Singapore. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Menon (Singapore): My delegation, too, would like to join preceding speakers in conveying our condolences to the Government and the people of Bangladesh and to the families of the nine Bangladeshi peacekeepers killed last Friday in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive progress report on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) for the last three months. I would like also to thank Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Foreign Minister of East Timor, for the comprehensive statement he made a short while ago.

My delegation would like also to pay tribute to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Sukehiro Hasegawa for his leadership and outstanding work. We are encouraged by the steady progress made in various aspects of Timor-Leste's development efforts.

The Secretary-General's report has confirmed that the decision taken in May 2004 to extend the mandate of UNMISET was the correct one. I would like to make a few observations with respect to the Secretary-General's report.

First, it is clear from the Secretary-General's report that Timor-Leste's judiciary and public administrative systems are still in the early stages of development and that much more needs to be done to strengthen the capacity of Timorese State institutions. The work of the international judges and of the United Nations civilian advisers remains crucial to the development of the justice system and the legal and financial institutions. Building up those key institutions will take time, and we would like to commend the judges and the United Nations civilian advisers for their hard work and dedication. The work of the justice sector, especially in the operations of the district courts, is an important and integral part of the ongoing efforts to rebuild and establish the rule of law in the country. The continued support of United Nations legal advisers will definitely help to facilitate that process.

Secondly, we are heartened to note the progress made in the development of the various law enforcement agencies and in the training of the Timorese police force. From the report, it is clear that UNMISET civilian police advisers, especially police trainers, are still critically needed to provide mentoring and guidance to those enforcement agencies in the area of developing standard operating procedures, ethics and human rights training, and anti-riot training. Until the initial capacity of the Timorese police and defence force is fully realized, the international civilian police advisers will be much needed to help bolster the capacity of the local police, in particular the border police unit, and to provide a good foundation for the long-term security of the country.

Thirdly, one of the key challenges facing the Timor-Leste Government is the issue of border management and control. United Nations liaison officers can play a critical role in the urgent and necessary task of building up the expertise and professionalism of the Timorese border units in managing border-related issues and, in doing so, contribute positively towards maintaining the overall order and stability.

We fully support the Secretary-General's assessment that, despite the extraordinary progress made in Timor-Leste, significant challenges remain and that the provision of international assistance beyond the current mandate is crucial for the long-term security, stability and sustained development of that young nation.

The report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change has correctly identified the importance of helping to build and strengthen important key institutions as part of the process of peacebuilding in post-conflict countries. That is one recommendation that has found broad in-principle support from the United Nations membership. It is also a recommendation which has a strong bearing on the current situation in Timor-Leste.

Timor-Leste is in the early stages of peacebuilding. It will continue to require international assistance, especially in strengthening its public administration, its judicial institutions and its security forces. Let us, as responsible partners, continue to render the needed support to that young nation, so that it can see concrete and measurable progress in its efforts at nation-building.

As the Secretary-General has pointed out in his report, a premature termination of the important tasks before us could jeopardize the achievements as well as the significant investment that the international community has made in Timor-Leste since 1999. We would therefore urge the Security Council to support the judicious recommendations of the transition working groups and of the Secretary-General that we maintain a United Nations mission with a scaled-down structure in Timor-Leste for an additional 12-month period, and that we conduct a further evaluation of Timor-Leste's self-sufficiency by May 2006.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Portugal. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Salgueiro (Portugal): First of all, let me express my Government's condolences to the Government of Bangladesh on the tragic death of nine peacekeepers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his latest report on the situation in Timor-Leste and Special Representative of the Secretary-General Hasegawa for his excellent presentation. I should like

to take this opportunity to praise the dedicated efforts of the civilian, military and police components of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) and to congratulate them on their many achievements in Timor-Leste.

I would like also to welcome Foreign Minister José Ramos-Horta and to thank him for his valuable contribution to this debate.

Portugal fully subscribes to the statement made by the representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union. I will add only a few comments of our own.

First, we very much welcome the establishment of a commission of experts to conduct a thorough assessment of the progress made by the judicial processes involving the Ad Hoc Human Rights Tribunal in Jakarta, the Serious Crimes Unit and the Special Panels for serious crimes in Dili. We look forward to its recommendations.

We also note and highly commend the steady and significant developments that have been taking place in the relationship of Timor-Leste with its neighbours regarding such important issues as land and maritime borders. It is of great importance that Timor-Leste secure timely access to its natural resources, thus paving the way for its peaceful and economically sustainable development.

Timor-Leste is in a critical period of its peacebuilding process, and the report of the Secretary-General clearly outlines a number of areas that will require international assistance beyond the expiration of the mandate of UNMISET. Much work remains to be done in the area of police training, namely in the management of the border, which remains porous and therefore a source of illegal incursions and illegal trade. Security on the border is a key factor for the political and social stability of Timor-Leste.

We note with concern that land border demarcation is incomplete. This is particularly worrisome because a successor arrangement to the present military liaison arrangement is not yet in place.

The Secretary-General's report states that Timor-Leste has made significant advances towards self-sufficiency. Nevertheless, significant challenges remain, and continuing international assistance beyond the expiration of UNMISET's current mandate is essential for the mid- and long-term security, stability and sustainable development of that country.

That is why Portugal agrees with the recommendations set out by the Secretary-General to ensure that, after May 2005, a new structure for the United Nations presence in Timor-Leste is configured in order to address the existing needs. This would include such components as military liaison officers, police trainers, civilian advisers, human rights officers and a small office to support the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

We have made many advances and have invested a great deal in Timor-Leste since 1999. We need to preserve and consolidate the good results already obtained. Therefore, we are convinced that in order for the United Nations presence to have the credibility it needs, it should have a clear mandate from the Council and should be led by a Special Representative of the Secretary-General. We should pursue, for a further period, a concerted effort to enable Timor-Leste to achieve three interrelated goals: security and stability; institution-building and State-building; and an adequate environment that can lead to sustainable development.

I would like to reiterate that Portugal — both individually and as a member of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries — will remain committed to supporting those goals and the efforts by the United Nations to that effect.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker is the representative of Indonesia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Jenie (Indonesia): I wish to start by conveying my delegation's sincere condolences to the people and the Government of Bangladesh on the tragic death of Bangladeshi peacekeepers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

As this is the last day of the Republic of Benin's presidency of the Security Council this month, let me congratulate you, Sir, on the very able stewardship that you have shown during this busy period for the Security Council.

I am also happy to warmly welcome His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, in our midst.

Before I continue, let me thank Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa for his comprehensive briefing on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). Given the current phase of the mission, my delegation is of the view that the report of the Secretary-General (S/2005/99) is very significant for the Council to consider.

Three months have elapsed since the Council last discussed this agenda item. Throughout the period under consideration, UNMISET has contributed significantly to the efforts to guide Timor-Leste to reach the stage of self-reliance and self-sufficiency. Nearly two years after UNMISET first started its work in Timor-Leste, we are glad to observe that the core administrative structures critical to the viability and political stability of Timor-Leste have been functioning well, as was originally envisioned by the Security Council. As the work of the mission begins to wind down, my delegation reiterates its consistent support for the mandate of the mission.

As a country that shares history with Timor-Leste, Indonesia regards the young nation as one of the priorities of its foreign policy. Furthermore, as we have always stated, both nations decided to embrace forward-looking and reconciliatory policies in the interest of their peoples and of their development. That decision has been manifested in strengthened bilateral relations and the intensive meetings of the highest political officials of both countries.

Rigorous efforts have been made in the past three years to promote reconciliation between the two countries. That reconciliation by the two Governments and peoples has reached a satisfactory level and has shown significant results. Operation Solidarity, launched by President Xanana Gusmão following the Tsunami which on 26 December 2004 hit the Indonesian provinces of Aceh and North Sumatra, and the strong solidarity shown by individual citizens from across Timor-Leste through their donations to the victims of that natural disaster in Indonesia also attest to the tangible progress made in reconciliation between the peoples and the Governments of the two countries. We are deeply touched by that expression of the solidarity and support of the people and the Government of Timor-Leste.

In addition, Indonesia has been helping reconciliation among East Timorese, for example, by facilitating visits by leaders of Timor-Leste for dialogue with their compatriots in West Timor and by facilitating family reunifications among East Timorese. However, in order to maintain and further promote bilateral relations, both countries have underscored the importance of resolving the existing residual issues, while at the same time deepening and expanding bilateral cooperation.

Indeed, President Yudhoyono and President Xanana Gusmão have met several times since Mr. Yudhoyono's inauguration as President of the Republic of Indonesia in October 2004. The 14 December 2004 meeting in Bali between leaders of the two countries constituted a historic moment in our bilateral relations. The leaders reiterated their desire and determination to further enhance a stable, friendly and mutually beneficial relationship between their two countries. They also noted with satisfaction the steady and positive growth of their relations in the past three years, as reflected, for example, by the significant progress made in addressing residual issues such as land-border delineation, refugees, traditional border-crossing access and regulated market arrangements. Beyond politics and security, shared optimism was noted concerning economic relations, which, during this period, have witnessed a steadily growing and mutually beneficial flow of trade and investment.

Now, let me turn to something that was referred to by Foreign Minister Ramos-Horta. With a view to addressing decisively the matters pertaining to the events of 1999, leaders of Indonesia and Timor-Leste made an important decision by agreeing upon the establishment of a Truth and Friendship Commission. In that regard, I should like to support the statement of Foreign Minister Ramos-Horta on this matter and I will limit myself to highlighting only certain important aspects about the Commission.

The Commission, as an alternative to the commission of experts will provide an additional unique avenue for both countries to jointly address reported human rights violations that took place in the period leading up to and immediately after the popular consultation in 1999; its focus will be on revealing the truth and promoting friendship. This agreement is unprecedented in history. By its terms, these two nations that were severely affected by a common experience have agreed jointly to embark on finding out the truth about the allegations of human rights violations that occurred. On the basis of those findings, intracommunal and intercommunal reconciliation

among the peoples of the two countries will be further promoted.

The agreement of the heads of the two Governments clearly reflects maturity and the spirit to seek an acceptable solution that will heal the wounds and unload the burden of the past in order to continue to foster bilateral relations and friendship among both peoples.

Different countries with their respective experiences have chosen different means to come to terms with their past. In some countries, their leaders and their peoples might seek truth and reconciliation rather than engage in a prosecutorial process. Indonesia and Timor-Leste have opted to seek truth and promote friendship as a new and unique mechanism. True justice can be served through truth and acknowledgement of responsibility, while a prosecutorial process might only achieve justice but not necessarily establish truth or promote reconciliation. Therefore, Indonesia and Timor-Leste are determined to pursue the conclusion of the process in addressing the issue through the framework of the Commission. The Commission will be open to the assistance of the international community based on joint requests from both countries.

We envision that the establishment of the Commission will be formally announced soon. That will enable both nations to embark on a path that will permit us to lay down the burdens of the past. In that endeavour, it is the hope of the Indonesian Government that the international community, and particularly the Security Council, will lend its support to that unique and unprecedented initiative.

On the question of the land boundary between the two nations, let me assure the Council that the Government of Indonesia is ready at any time to sign the provisional agreement on the land boundary. We were pleased to hear the indication of a possible signing by both countries of the provisional agreement soon. The draft of that agreement was discussed and agreed on by both countries at their bilateral meeting in June 2004. As the Council is aware, there has been remarkable progress in the land-boundary delineation process, on which both countries have agreed on the coordinates of the border points along almost 95 per cent of the border. Some of the lines connecting those points have been agreed on as the boundary lines, and some are being considered as the approximate boundary lines.

The remaining tasks for the joint technical team, therefore, are the densification of the border points and the delineation survey in order to upgrade the approximate boundary lines into agreed boundary lines. Indonesia and Timor-Leste also have to discuss the remaining three unsolved segments. Another important work that has to be accomplished is the demarcation of the boundary lines. The joint technical team will resume further surveys of the border in June 2005 to register further progress. While looking forward to making further progress in the land boundary demarcation, we are cautious about the target for the completion of the process within a certain time frame.

In that regard, Indonesia would like to stress that border management is a continuous cooperative endeavour that will not stop once the two sides have come to an agreement on the land boundaries. In addition, border management is also deemed necessary in order to better respond to the possible incidence of criminal acts along the border areas. The continued strengthening of cooperation between the Indonesian police and military and the border patrol units of Timor-Leste on the border has resulted in a notable improvement of security and stability, not only in areas around the border, but also in Timor-Leste in general. Indonesia is committed to enhancing security cooperation with Timor-Leste, particularly in the field of border management. In that regard, the Joint Border Committee, as a subsidiary of the annual meeting of the Indonesia-Timor-Leste Joint Ministerial Commission, remains an important mechanism in which the two sides can, in a direct manner, discuss and enhance coordination in addressing issues relating to border demarcation and border management.

While land border demarcation is important, member States might also be interested to learn of developments in the delimitation of Timor-Leste's maritime boundary, on which the report is rather silent.

Now that the termination of the mandate of UNMISET is in view, it is also time to take a hard look at the need for Timor-Leste to strengthen its national capacity-building. In that regard, Indonesia understands that Timor-Leste, as reflected in the letter of its Prime Minister, Mr. Mari Alkatiri, to Secretary-General Kofi Annan of 20 January 2005, is seeking

additional United Nations assistance for a further year, following the progress made so far by UNMISET.

My delegation is of the view that the overall achievement of UNMISET does not preclude the possibility that some continued assistance from the international community to Timor-Leste is still needed. Given the particular need for Timor-Leste to strengthen its capacity-building in various sectors of public administration, as well as to maintain public order, the additional United Nations assistance requested by Timor-Leste deserves positive consideration.

The President (*spoke in French*): I think the representative of Indonesia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Thailand. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Mrs. Laohaphan (Thailand): First of all, I would like to thank you, Sir, and the Security Council for allowing me to participate in today's open debate on Timor-Leste under your presidency.

I wish to acknowledge the presence of Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.

Like the Council members and other representatives who spoke before me, I wish to express our deep condolences to the Government of Bangladesh for the tragic loss of its peacekeeping officers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

My delegation wishes to thank Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for presenting the progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET).

Thailand welcomes the continual progress that has been made in Timor-Leste and commends the contributions of UNMISET, the United Nations programmes and agencies, the Bretton Woods institutions, non-governmental organizations and international donors, and the efforts made, with the strong determination of the Government of Timor-Leste, in the nation-building process of that country. Such a positive development would not have been possible without the crucial roles of all parties concerned, and especially that of the United Nations, which has been internationally acknowledged as a success story for the Organization in peacekeeping.

The journey in the advancement of Timor-Leste is still at the beginning stage. To be realistic, although many achievements have been made, the country's path to progress will continue to meet with a mixture of successes and challenges alike. In order to help Timor-Leste to grow and prosper alongside the community of nations, the international community must remain active and engaged in rendering assistance to Timor-Leste.

UNMISET has played a significant role in restoring peace and maintaining stability, as well as in developing democracy, development and administration processes in Timor-Leste. Nevertheless, as the report has pointed out, much remains to be done to make sure that the gains achieved up to now are protected and put to better use in the future. It is thus imperative that the accomplishments of UNMISET be maintained in a sustainable manner for the benefit of the long-term development of the country and its people.

Therefore, Thailand concurs with the recommendation of the Secretary-General that UNMISET should maintain its presence in the country, with a scaled-down composition and size. That can be seen as a step-by-step approach which will help to ensure the steady and effective functioning of the administrative institutions in Timor-Leste after the eventual withdrawal of UNMISET, and, more importantly, to ensure greater Timorese involvement in and ownership of the nation-building process.

With respect to Timor-Leste, my delegation would like to point out that the development of the country needs to be approached in a holistic manner. For Timor-Leste to progress towards a sustainable future, the country's economic and social dimensions, or the "human face" of Timor-Leste, will also require continued assistance from the international community. As much as the Government of the country needs international assistance, the people of Timor-Leste also need it.

In order for Timor-Leste to move forward in a sustainable manner, its people's standard of living and quality of life will also have to move upward gradually. The capacity-building tasks that the United Nations programmes and agencies, the Bretton Woods institutions, non-governmental organizations and international donors have undertaken in Timor-Leste

have thus far resulted in remarkable progress in various areas.

However, uninterrupted international support in those economic and social dimensions remains crucial. Among other ills, poverty, illiteracy and unemployment still plague Timor-Leste and will continue to hamper its nation-building process and national development for some time in the future. The support of the international community to combat those problems will be needed even after the conclusion of UNMISET's mandate.

Timor-Leste is a country with a promising future. If nurtured, and with all the help provided by the international community, its potential can be increased considerably. The forthcoming development partners conference will provide us with a venue to reaffirm our support for Timor-Leste.

For its part, Thailand is pleased to have rendered support to Timor-Leste in its national development process, with a focus on human-resource development, in the fields agreed in the memorandum of understanding on economic and technical cooperation, which was signed in 2003, namely, agriculture, public health, fisheries, trade and investment, banking and insurance, tourism, energy, capacity-building on internal security issues and negotiations on a maritime zone, geo-information and a sustainable economy.

Sixteen activities have already been implemented in 2003 and 2004. The remaining 16 activities will be implemented by the end of 2005. Thailand is willing to continue its technical cooperation support to Timor-Leste after the completion of the current plan, in 2005. In addition, Thailand plans to cooperate with other donors, such as Japan's International Cooperation Agency, to supplement the bilateral cooperation between Thailand and Timor-Leste.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of New Zealand. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. MacKay (New Zealand): I would like to join others in saying what a pleasure it is to have Foreign Minister Ramos-Horta here with us today. I would also like to thank Mr. Hasegawa for the introduction and briefing he gave with regard to the report of the Secretary-General.

New Zealand joins other speakers in reflecting on the unprecedented progress made by Timor-Leste towards self-sufficiency in just 5 years. Given the events of 1999, that has been a truly remarkable achievement, and one that should rightly engender pride among Timor-Leste's Government and people. When we consider the scale of suffering in terrible conflicts unfolding elsewhere on the international stage, it is heartening to see Timor-Leste focussing on the tasks associated with post-conflict peacebuilding.

The consolidation phase of the United Nations role in Timor-Leste, which was initiated last year, requires that a delicate balance be struck between a robust assessment of what is needed on the ground and an instinctive caution not to precipitously withdraw. We continue to see a role, beyond a standard developmental one, for the United Nations in Timor-Leste to safeguard the enormous progress that has been made to date.

The Secretary-General's latest report provides guidance on the areas in which the international community should continue to support Timor-Leste and identifies those sectors that are considered crucial for long-term stability. We consider a modest, time-bound follow-on mission to the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), tasked primarily with capacity-building, to be an appropriate way to assist Timor-Leste's transition to a sustainable development assistance framework.

The evidence of warm and strengthened relations between Timor-Leste and Indonesia is to be welcomed. We are encouraged by the further progress on demarcation of the border, which has been referred to here today, including in the statement just made by the Permanent Representative of Indonesia. We look forward to further progress being achieved before the conclusion of UNMISET's mandate in May this year. We urge both Governments to also give priority to a response to the draft legal framework to guide border normalization issues, which was passed to them for consideration in November last year.

As a regional neighbour, Timor-Leste will continue to be one of our core bilateral development assistance partners. We will keep under review our bilateral assistance to determine whether there is additional assistance that we can provide. But we agree that there remain many capacity-building tasks that can best be provided for by multilateral institutions. We

therefore consider it appropriate that development agencies and international financial institutions have begun to assume some responsibilities that currently rest with the peacekeeping mission. We strongly support that as a means to assist Timor-Leste's transition from a peacekeeping to sustainable developmental framework.

The President (*spoke in French*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.